

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

081102Z Jun 04

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 000939

SIPDIS

OFFICIAL INFORMAL

FOR SA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/08/14

TAGS: [AMGT](#) [CE](#) [MV](#)

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL INFORMAL NUMBER 081 (06/08/04)

Classified by DCM James F. Entwistle for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

CONTENTS: PARLIAMENT AS USUAL, AGAIN

- LEADING BUDDHIST MONK DIES

- REAGAN CONDOLENCE BOOK

PARLIAMENT AS USUAL, AGAIN

1. (C) FYI. On June 8, Parliament met for the third time since the April elections and chaos reigned again. Details are still unclear, but Buddhist monks MPs in the JHU party came to blows with MPs from the President's United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) regarding the validity of replacing one of the JHU monk MP. The incident occurred amid other reports that the UPFA was attempting to win over additional MPs to gain a majority in the 225-member Parliament. There is no indication, at present, that the UPFA gained their majority. (POL)

LEADING BUDDHIST MONK DIES

2. (SBU) FYI. The Most Venerable Rambukwella Vipassi Mahanayake Thera, one of Sri Lanka's most senior Buddhist monks, passed away on June 7. As chief monk of the Malwatte Sect of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Venerable Vipassi Mahanayake Thera was a leading voice in Sri Lankan society. He was well respected for his moderate views in the peace process, religious, and cultural issues, and politicians and civil society across the spectrum sought his opinion. The Mahanayake Thera's replacement will be chosen through an election by fellow monks and there is no clear successor at the moment. The deputy Mahanayake, another moderate figure in Sri Lankan Buddhism, will be the acting chief of the Malwatte Temple in the interim. (POL)

REAGAN CONDOLENCE BOOK

3. (U) Our condolence book was open for signature this morning, with Foreign Minister Kadirgamar the first to come in. (DCM)
LUNSTEAD